

From: [Susan Rebillot](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Gibson, Kenya J. - City Council](#); [Trammell, Reva M. - City Council](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for Ordinances 2026-092 and 2026-096
Date: Monday, June 1, 2026 9:14:15 AM

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Dear Members of the Organizational Development Committee,

I am writing to support recommending that proposed Ordinances 2026-092 and 2026-096 be referred to City Council for full review and public hearings. Since I learned about the City's plan for zoning reforms, I delved into the data about zoning reform outcomes and processes around the U.S. for the past 10 to 20 years. I firmly believe that Richmond's final plan should be evidence based and should reflect best practices developed over the past decade in its zoning technology, its complimentary and necessary tools, and in its community engagement and education processes. There is a tremendous amount of data that Richmond can benefit from in order to achieve the stated goals of Code Refresh, but the first two drafts and the processes followed to create those drafts do not reflect an understanding of available evidence or of best practices for processes. City Council has an opportunity to improve the final draft and to decrease polarization and to broaden community input so that the voices of special interest groups do not dominate our outcomes.

Studies from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, American Planning Association, National Civic League, and Kettering Foundation suggest that the most successful formula for zoning reform processes consists of the following. First, a Citizens Community Advisory Commission, which both proposed ordinances provide. For Richmond, the strongest approach would be a commission that reflects:

- Homeowners and renters
- Northside, Southside, East End, West End, and Downtown residents
- Affordable housing advocates
- Neighborhood association representatives
- Young adults and seniors
- Small business owners
- Transit users

I believe that the number of members of the commission provided in both ordinances is inadequate and likely needs to be 25 to 35 to be adequately representative and balanced across the city and demographics.

In addition to the tasks of the commission members that are outlined in both ordinances, the process for community engagement, education and honest discussions about tradeoffs or secondary consequences of upzoning should shift from on-line and poster board post-its at

open houses to face to face small group discussions. The process should also shift to a more deliberative process where citizens evaluate multiple growth scenarios, conduct neighborhood workshops, and make recommendations before final zoning decisions. Research suggests that this type of representative deliberative process is more likely to reduce polarization than relying primarily on presenting a plan and then requesting responses at public hearings, where participation is often dominated by the most organized interest groups.

Finally, I would like to encourage all City Council representatives to take advantage of the readily available data and best practices recommendations regarding zoning reform outcomes, obstacles to effectiveness, and effective planning and community engagement processes. The future of Richmond will be shaped by zoning reform

Warmest regards,

Susan Rebillot

727-744-3779

“There is no power greater for change than a community discovering what it cares about.”
Margaret J. Wheatley

From: [Doug Allen](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Lynch, Stephanie A. - City Council Office](#); [Robins, Amy E. - City Council Office](#)
Subject: Oppose ORD 2026-092
Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2026 1:12:49 PM

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I oppose ORD 2026-092 which would create an unnecessary and duplicative Code Refresh Review Committee.

v/r
Doug Allen
513 S Pine St
Richmond, VA
5th District

Sent from iPhone

From: [Bruce Pardoe](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Support for a Citizen Advisory Committee for Code Refresh
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 8:47:19 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of your district, I am writing to express my support for the establishment of a Citizen Action Committee to advise and review the rezoning plans. Richond300 affects Richmond citizens, the residents of different neighborhoods. Developers often have louder voices and/or easier access to city decision makers. than individual residents. It is critical that the plan receives input in real time from those whose daily quality of life is most affected.

Thank you for reading and considering my request to protect the integrity of our neighborhoods



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From: jrice55@verizon.net
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Proposals
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 5:32:12 PM

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RE: In Support of the Proposals for a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

I am a citizen of Richmond and am strongly in support of concepts in the proposals presented by Councilwoman Gibson and Councilwoman Trammel for the establishment of a Citizens Advisory Council (CAC).

CAC is a means to further prepare Council to make a foundational decision for the future of Richmond while at the same time trying to improve the public's confidence in transparency and accountability related to Code Refresh. The CAC can be distinguished from the ZAC which was designed to advise on the creation of the draft while the CAC will assist with Council/Planning Commission's evaluation of what is being proposed.

I urge the Council to adopt one of these two proposals.

Thank you,

Jennifer Rice

Cell: 804-347-5611 jrice55@verizon.net

From: [E.G](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: support for a CAC for Code refresh
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2026 8:31:29 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the establishment of a Citizen Action Committee to advise and review the rezoning plans. Richond300 affects Richmond citizens, the residents of different neighborhoods. Developers often have louder voices and/or easier access to city decision makers. than individual residents. It is critical that the plan receives input in real time from those whose daily quality of life is most affected.

Thank you for reading and considering my request.

--

Emily Grimes

From: revjlb@icloud.com
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Re: Citizens Advisory Committee
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2026 9:29:29 AM

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Hello City Clerk:

I am writing to request that the Citizens Advisory Committee be established sooner rather than later. This committee is crucial in looking at and advising on matters of great concern with Code Refresh.

While the City has reached out to 5,000 residents, that's clearly not enough given there's over 250,000 residents. The City is being lead by the developers as indicated during the Council meeting a week ago and the citizens are being left behind and have no idea what Code Refresh will do to their neighborhoods, especially in minority communities.

One size does not fit all! More consideration and flexibility should be given to unique and legacy neighborhoods instead of destroying them.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

SAVE WESTWOOD

Reverend Jeanette Brown, President
Westwood Civic League
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Susan Rebillot](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#); [Vonck, Kevin J. - PDR](#); [Signer, Mira E. - Mayor's Office](#); [Mayor Danny Avula](#)
Cc: [Gibson, Kenya J. - City Council](#); [Elliott, Sarandon C. - City Council](#)
Subject: Letter of Opposition to Code Refresh Draft 3 RMC Zoning for Hermitage Nursing Home Parcels, Westwood Avenue and Hermitage Road
Date: Friday, June 19, 2026 10:42:22 AM

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Dear Dr. Vonck and Honorable City Council Representatives,

In opposing the proposed zoning change that is indicated on the Draft 3 Code Refresh Map for the Hermitage Nursing Home parcels, located at Westwood Avenue and Hermitage Road, I am not opposing housing and mixed use commercial development. I am opposing a site specific high intensity zoning code without a demonstrated infrastructure, design, and community benefit plan that is consistent with the Richmond 300 Master Plan. Richmond 300 calls for growth that is coordinated with infrastructure and community investments. A blanket RMC entitlement without those requirements implements only the density objective while ignoring the supporting policies

Here are my areas of objection and rationales.

1. Inconsistency with the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

Richmond 300 generally supports:

- more housing choices
- walkable mixed-use areas
- equitable development
- better public benefits

But it also emphasizes:

- context-sensitive development
- infrastructure alignment
- neighborhood character
- parks and open space
- resilient development

2. **The Hermitage site is a major redevelopment opportunity that deserves a better plan**

Because this is a large institutional parcel, it is exactly the type of site where Richmond could require a comprehensive redevelopment plan.

A stronger alternative:

Approve a Planned Development / Special District approach requiring:

- maximum building height limits
- unit count limits
- affordable housing percentage
- senior housing preservation or replacement
- traffic study
- pedestrian safety improvements
- tree canopy plan
- stormwater management
- public green space

3. The issue is not housing — it is scale and transition

The surrounding area is primarily established residential neighborhoods with a mix of lower-scale housing. A transition from institutional use to residential use may be appropriate, but the jump to unlimited RMC intensity creates a scale mismatch between one parcel and the surrounding community.

A better planning approach would be:

- allow redevelopment
- allow housing
- allow mixed-income or senior housing
- require step-down heights near existing neighborhoods
- require a site plan review for major intensity

4. Unlimited density removes the City's and the Community's ability to negotiate public benefits

Once the zoning is granted, the developer has the right to build within the zoning code.

The City and community lose leverage to secure:

- affordable housing commitments
- tree canopy preservation
- public open space
- traffic improvements
- pedestrian safety improvements
- stormwater improvements
- senior/community services

The City should not give away the highest-value zoning entitlement before determining what public benefits are needed in exchange.

5. RMC zoning will not achieve the affordability goals being promised

A common argument for high-density zoning is that more units automatically create affordability.

The evidence from many cities shows that:

- increased supply can help long-term affordability under certain market conditions
- but new high-density construction is usually market-rate initially
- luxury or high-cost units often dominate redevelopment in high-demand neighborhoods
- affordability requires specific tools: subsidies, affordability requirements, land trusts, nonprofit development, or inclusionary mechanisms

Approving unlimited density is not the same as approving affordable housing.

Key Highlights

This is not a question of whether Richmond needs housing. It does. The question is whether the City should permanently authorize unlimited density on one parcel without first requiring the infrastructure, design standards, and public benefits necessary to support that growth.

The Hermitage property is an important redevelopment opportunity, but the City should not trade away its planning authority by granting the maximum zoning entitlement upfront. A project of this size should come with a coordinated plan: traffic and pedestrian improvements, stormwater capacity, tree canopy protection, appropriate transitions to surrounding neighborhoods, and measurable housing benefits.

Responsible growth means pairing new density with the investments that make density work. We need a site-specific, strategic plan, not a by right high intensity zoning code.

Warmest regards,

Susan Rebillot
Third District Resident
Ginter Place
1350 Westwood Avenue
Unit 303
Richmond, VA 23227
727-744-3779

“There is no power greater for change than a community discovering what it cares about.”
Margaret J. Wheatley

From: [Jason James \(jjames\)](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: City Council Meeting 6/22
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2026 4:37:53 PM

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Good evening,

I would like to be included on the list of speakers for the city council meeting scheduled for 6/22/26. I wish to speak to an item on the consent agenda.

Thank you,
Jason James
3812 Hermitage Road Apt. J
Richmond, VA 23227

From: [Caroline Jennings](#)
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Code Refresh- Comments for 6/22 meeting of City Council
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026 10:00:24 AM

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I am a citizen of Richmond's First District and have been for several decades. In advance of the 6/22 meeting, I would like to urge City Council to support the creation of the Citizens Advisory Committee regarding the re-zoning process. Of the two ordinances proposed, Councilor Gibson's makes the most sense and ensures that any zoning rewrite will adhere to the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

A Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will provide a balanced approach and offer an important interim step prior to a final City Council vote on Code Refresh. The Citizens Advisory Committee also is a means to further prepare Council to make a foundational decision for the future of Richmond while at the same time trying to improve the public's confidence in transparency and accountability related to Code Refresh. The CAC can be distinguished from the ZAC which was designed to advise on the creation of the draft while the CAC will assist with Council/Planning Commission's evaluation of what is being proposed.

I believe that citizen engagement is low because people just don't know about the proposals or, in many cases, if they do, understanding the true impact to their neighborhoods and the city is very complex. A CAC can bridge the gap and hopefully, ultimately, bring more consensus and understanding to this complex process.

Caroline Jennings,
Resident of the First District